

SOUTHBURY LAND TRUST, INC.

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March 10, 2010

To: Members of the Appropriations Committee

RE: OPPOSE DIVERSION OF CIA FUNDS

Land trusts in communities around the state have realized how important farmland is to our communities, to our local economies, to our need for locally grown food, and to our rural heritage.

Thanks to funding from the Community Investment Act, The Southbury Land Trust has preserved significant farm properties in our town. Diverting funds from the Community Investment Act will undermine the momentum we've created.

With real estate values relatively low at this time, farmland preservation funding has greater purchasing power.

Diversion of CIA funds would cut Department of Agriculture staff and would mean that some great deals on farmland will fall through.

Cuts in state farmland funding will also mean that matching funds for millions of dollars in available federal money will be lost. Our state, our farmers, and our people can't afford this degree of lost opportunity.

The Community Investment Act funds many programs and projects around the state, providing jobs and improving the quality of life in Connecticut's cities and towns.

The fee that provides CIA funds was established for clearly defined purposes which were broadly supported by taxpayers. It should be kept in place for those purposes.

Thank you,

Tom Crider, President
The Southbury Land Trust, Inc.